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Kelly

Unifying the Liberal College Curriculum

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Unifying the Liberal College Curriculum

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NOTE

The following pages constitute the addresses given under the auspices of the Commission on Organization of the College Curriculum of the Association of American Colleges, at the Annual Meeting in Chicago, Ill., January 12, 1923. They will appear as part of the Proceedings of the Association in the Association of American Colleges *BULLETIN*, April, 1923.

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REPORT OF THE ASSOCIATION'S COMMISSION ON THE ORGANIZATION OF THE COLLEGE CURRICULUM

DR. ROBERT L. KELLY, Chairman

This is not a formal report of the Commission. It is a series of observations by individuals. The subject matter of the addresses has not been coordinated except that there is a common theme. No speaker knows what the others are about to say.

In the two preceding reports certain facts bearing upon the *materials* of the college curriculum were set forth, the discussions being conducted with special reference to tendencies since the World War and to the emphases given to *departmental* activities. Four general conclusions have been reached—that the curriculum of the liberal colleges is becoming *simplified* as indicated by the decreasing number of major departments, and that this simplification is largely the result of the expression of *student preference* and not of faculty prescription; (2) that it is becoming *humanized* in that increasingly the more modern material with social content is being substituted for the older “disciplinary” and “cultural” material; (3) that it is becoming *individualized* in that while English is the master subject in practically every institution and such subjects as French and chemistry nearly always follow in immediate or close succession, the total number of subjects taught in all American colleges is very large and they are distributed among the colleges presumably with reference to individual disposition and character. It has also been shown (4) that among the detached colleges in general, and even among the liberal arts colleges, with rare exceptions, in great universities situated in the metropolitan centers, the curriculum is *not* becoming *vocationalized*. Whatever motive liberal college students may have, most of them are not immediately concerned with professional and technical subjects.

At the same time, (5) it has been brought out that while

the liberal college is still striving to be primarily a place of *orientation*, the more fundamental and *unifying* subjects are increasingly conspicuous by their absence from the curriculum.

This year the Commission addresses itself to the very complicated and difficult task of inquiring what steps have been taken or may be taken to change the interest of curriculum builders from the traditional process of dealing with *materials* as segregated in separate departments to the apparently more vital process of dealing with *methods of study* and *functional values* in the curriculum as a whole.

It is unnecessary to attempt to account for the confusion which has arisen through the former method of curriculum building, a method, as our investigations indicate, which is still the dominant one. A careful scrutiny of the program of study of most of the colleges indicates that they are constructed very much as a tariff bill is constructed in the Congress of the United States. The final result is the outcome of certain strains and tensions, of concessions and exchanges as between departmental representatives. The evidences that unifying principles are actually functioning in the development of the college curriculum are difficult to discover.

Undoubtedly the influence of the free elective system as it has operated in the past and the analytic tendencies of the newer scientific subjects have been strong factors in producing the present state of confusion. The possible material for study in a liberal college has developed altogether beyond the point where any student may ever be expected to comprehend it in four years' time. The problem thus offered has been very largely that of designating *certain subjects* as inherently necessary for a college degree. The extent to which the materials for the degree have been selected for their supposedly inherent value can only be appreciated if one seriously devotes himself for a series of weeks to a study of college catalogues. The student is impressed as this study goes on that the catalogues indicate

very little *curriculum-mindedness* and very large *department-mindedness*, on the part of curriculum builders.

The specific question which is raised in this report, therefore, is—Has the curriculum material become so enriched that for this reason alone, if not for other reasons, an effort to unify the curriculum on the basis of materials is impossible and should give place to the effort to unify along functional lines, with the frankly implied admission that in neither event will complete unification be obtained by the college student.

It may be pointed out at the beginning that in the four tendencies of the curriculum which have already been referred to—that is, the tendency toward simplification, toward socialization, toward individualization, as well as in the tendency to maintain a non-vocational attitude, there is a functional element which is largely responsible for the tendency. The students *express preference* for certain subjects. Most of them *prefer modern* subjects. They *prefer* subjects related to *individual motives*. They *seek* the realization of liberal rather than *professional motives*. The questions before us then are specifically what provision are the colleges making for the practical realization of these preferences, or, what provision may the college make for their more successful realization?

In order, if possible, to find the answers to these questions, sixty colleges, members of the Association, were selected at random on three different bases. Approximately twenty colleges were selected which are accredited by the Association of American Universities, twenty others which are accredited by various regional standardizing agencies, and a third group of twenty which have not been accredited either by the Association of American Universities or the regional standardizing agencies. They are accredited by State agencies. A few are included in the last list from the approved list of the University of California.

Class A: Accredited by the Association of American Universities: Amherst, Haverford, Vassar, Smith, Wellesley, Leland Stanford, Northwestern, University of Penn-

sylvania, Pomona, Grinnell, Vanderbilt, College of St. Catherine, Washington & Lee, Knox, Carleton, Hamilton, Oberlin, Lafayette, Randolph Macon Woman's, Earlham.

Class B: Accredited by various regional standardizing agencies: Mills, University of Denver, Butler, Parsons, Otterbein, Transylvania, Emporia, St. Olaf, Westminster, Mo., Nebraska Wesleyan, Adelphi, Davidson, Baylor, Hiram, Wittenberg, Franklin & Marshall, Huron, Campion, Muhlenberg, Lebanon Valley.

Class C: Not accredited by either the Association of American Universities or the regional standardizing agencies: Judson, Hendrix, Connecticut College for Women, Whittier, George Washington, Wesleyan Female, Hedding, Evansville, Kansas Wesleyan, Berea, Hood, Hope, Concordia Minn., Central Wesleyan, Mo., Salem, Bluffton, University of Tulsa, Fisk, Trinity, Texas.

Two preliminary steps were taken in the effort to answer the questions before us. Effort was made first to discover the various grouping systems announced in the catalogues of these institutions, together with the possible bases for grouping; and secondly, effort was made to ascertain the prescribed requirements for the Bachelor's degree.

* * * * *

It is found that all colleges in each of the three classes have some kind of grouping system. It is assumed that this means some type of effort at unifying the curriculum, or at least parts of it. The prevailing number of groups is three or four, and this statement applies to each of the three classes of colleges taken for illustrative purposes. The three fundamental groups may be designated by the representative titles—Language, Science and Philosophy. Ordinarily, when there are four groups the Language group is broken up into English and Foreign Language. There are some variations in each group—for instance, Smith College in *Class A* has nine groups; Baylor University in *Class B* has eleven groups, and the Central Wesleyan College, Mo., in *Class C* has six groups. While there is no great variation between the classes as to the number of groups,

there is much variation as to their content and meaning. The first impression one gets from a study like this is that the definitions, usages and purposes of the different colleges are so multiform and varied that simplification is well nigh impossible. However, it is to be said that in the colleges belonging to *Class A* there is a relative degree of simplicity which has been evolved from the apparently hopeless complexity. The term "group" is used by the colleges in no less than ten different ways. The unusual methods of grouping are found, for the most part, in *Class C* and *Class B*.

(1) There are colleges which still adhere to the A.B., Ph.B., and B.S. groups, and which stipulate the numbers of the courses within those several groups. (*Class B*).

(2) There are colleges which still hold to the old classical, English, modern language, Latin, science, history and mathematics groups, and that require specifically most of the work within the given group. (*Classes B and C*).

(3) Then there is the division into a general group, major group and the elective group. (*Class C*).

(4) Some colleges arrange their prescribed studies in groups from which the student is required to take definite work, as indicated. (*Class C*).

(5) On the other hand, there are colleges which classify their electives as group electives and free electives. (*Class C*).

(6) There are colleges outside this study which refer in their catalogues to the upper class group and the lower class group. (California, Chicago).

(7) There is what is known as a "Group Major," which carries with it an examination over a field of study and over three courses forming a well unified field of study taken in the same year, together with outside reading. (*Class A*).

(8) There are outside this study what are called "Major Groups" within divisions of which there are usually three. (Williams and the University of Colorado).

(9) Bryn Mawr outside this study designates studies in

the catalogue not as belonging to a class but as belonging to a group, and for this purpose the college has devised 71 different groups.

(10) Finally, *there is the group which is made up presumably of related subjects and which may be used definitely for functional purposes in assisting the student in the effort to relate his studies and unify his curriculum throughout. (Classes A and B).*

The discovery is made that there are very few colleges which surrender themselves to the functional philosophy of the group as just stated in (10). Almost without exception in addition to the various groups the colleges have definitely stipulated *requirements for graduation*, and these stipulations for the most part constitute a system which runs parallel to the grouping system. For instance, at Smith, which has nine groups, there are also nine types of requirements for graduation. St. Olaf announces eleven different types of requirements for the degree. Campion and Wesleyan, Ga., have subject requirements for each of the degrees—A.B., B.S., and Ph.B. Denver has a major-minor system, a group system with *restrictions* and a statement of prescribed courses, ten hours of which, except in English, *may be waived!* As has been said, the colleges, almost without exception, have certain definite requirements for the degree and these requirements are stated as definitely in terms of *curriculum material*. In range they require from one-third to three-fourths of the work for a degree. The group system is largely undefined and very loosely enforced, or not enforced at all. As a matter of fact, the colleges as a class have never put the group system to the test, as a means of unifying the students' curriculum. Two or three colleges have successfully done so.

If the question be asked, therefore, what the purpose of the grouping system is, the prevailing answer seems to be as is definitely stated by Hiram College, that it is "for convenience in reference." There are a few colleges (Earlham, Carleton, University of Pennsylvania) which rely very largely on the group system in conjunction with the major-

minor system and a system of faculty advisors for steering the student through his college course. That is to say, the groups are under control and actually function, although even in the college which best illustrates this principle, there is still lingering a definitely stated requirement of four semester hours of English composition. In the case of most institutions examined, the groups are not intended to function in that form but are stated to explain to the student the reason for prescribed courses and to aid in forming the educational philosophy with which he may build his curriculum. They function as a *deterrent* to a miscellaneous curriculum by the mere statement that they are proof of balance, but in most cases they remain in the status of an explanation. The faculty has worked out a curriculum desirable for the students, expressed it in certain prescribed subjects in semester hours, and given the student the group statement as the reason. The student, however, is to be governed by the curriculum formulated and may or may not be concerned, much less guided, by the group statement which becomes rather academic. The faculties do not live and the students are not guided immediately by the group systems.

The faculties of numerous institutions have recently been attempting to assist the student in unifying his curriculum by means of various types of coordinating or orientation courses. A statement of these courses as offered to or required of Freshmen is given in the October issue of the *Bulletin* of the American Association of University Professors. Committee G of that Association also discusses these courses at considerable length and makes recommendations. It is enough to say here that of the eight purposes underlying those several courses which Committee G has discovered, five of them are efforts to unify the *materials* of the curriculum. One is intended to endeavor to train the student in *thinking*. The others are *administrative*. In an indirect way, it may be said that all of them have functional value in that it is the hope that the courses may result in defining for the Freshmen more definitely their own major

interests. At the same time, as has been suggested, the general emphasis is upon content and not on functional values. In addition to these coordinating courses for Freshmen there are being introduced into numerous colleges orientation courses for upper classmen, the purpose of which is to assist them in formulating a philosophy of life. These courses have the advantage of dealing with materials with which the student is somewhat more familiar than he could possibly be in the earlier stage of his college career. Their purpose, however, is to put into operation at last a process that has been largely ignored in the earlier years of college study. They constitute a cap placed on top of the shock—I assume that you are all farmers—for protection against the wind and the weather in the world of real life which the student has to enter after leaving the world of things academic.

A demand may fairly be made of the Commission that it state a practicable plan by which an effort functionally to unify each student's curriculum may be achieved. It appears that it is possible to submit such a plan merely by synthesizing what has been abstracted in years of experimentation. The free elective system had the plan *implicit* in it but failed because it allowed experience to run riot. The plan in all of its details is not found operative at present in any single institution of which the Commission has knowledge, but all phases of the plan—the mere skeleton of which is now given—are *operating satisfactorily in the institutions here considered*. I am not suggesting another experiment, but reporting (unsynthesized) experience. There is in a few colleges a relating of the (1) group system, the (2) major-minor system and the (3) faculty advisory system which when actually put into operation accomplishes a large part of the purpose proposed. If there were added to this (4) some device for insuring cumulative study as is being done in the honors courses, the *outline of the machinery* of the system would be fully stated. (a) The groups are made up on a basis as natural as that which draws groups of faculty men together to lunch in the

faculty club rooms. (b) The major-minor system is enforced in such a way as to provide both *concentration* and *distribution*. (c) And both systems just referred to are so flexible that the faculty advisor and the student work out a program which is *individual* from the student point of view, and, of course, *corporate* from the point of view of the college, and *social* from the point of view of both. (d) The Freshman or Sophomore furnishes initial enthusiasms and purposes upon which the system is built, and if these cannot be discovered outside of athletics and "student activities," the faculty should be sure that the fault is not their own rather than the student's. In his address at New Haven before the American Historical Association recently, Secretary Hughes in speaking upon the Washington Conference said, "I believe in conferences, but I do not believe there is much hope of success in a conference *as such*. The reason why the Washington Conference was successful was because a group of men came together who had common desires and purposes and who were intent upon solving common problems." This is a chapter from real life. Student activities are also chapters from real life. A method must be discovered by which student and teacher will have common desires and be bent upon the solution of common problems. The vocational schools have solved this problem. Is a college education, *as such*, so desirable as a college education which is related to vital interests?

For, of course, an effort to unify the college curriculum on a functional basis is merely an effort to realize the philosophy of interest in the college domain. The effort recognizes that *method is more important than subject matter* in that it is more related to life's problems immediately and more serviceable for the problems which are to come. It recognizes that *thinking* is a different process from *acquiring knowledge*, but it does not under-estimate scholarship for it recognizes that knowledge is more secure if it is the result of skill in study and is in response to vital motives. It attempts to find within each student a response to aims as fundamental as were the War aims in the S. A. T. C.

formulated in an hour of national emergency. It undertakes to discover equally fundamental constructive aims, to realize the *moral equivalent* not of war but of the *vocational motive* which characterizes the professional and technical school. It undertakes to maintain *ideals* along with *ideas*. It introduces the student into real life early in his college career and affords opportunity to the teacher to become a creator instead of a crammer. It is intended to make a liberal college in truth as well as in name a college of arts.

PRESIDENT ALEXANDER MEIKLEJOHN

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I am to make a few disconnected remarks as a member of the Commission on the things that have been said by the chairman. We have not had very much conference together and I am afraid you will not discover very much connection at least in what I am going to say, if I can remember what I am going to say. In general I should say that I find myself quite in agreement with what he calls the functional point of view. The outstanding fact of that apparently is a hatred of departments. Along that line I am willing to go as far as any one will go and then try to go a little farther. I should not, however, I think, be inclined to substitute for the department the group.

In so far as the argument rests upon the notion of the group, I should probably find myself somewhat out of sympathy with the chairman. In place of the department it would seem to be desirable not to substitute the group but the curriculum as a whole. Again, as you will see, if I can develop my thought at all, I shall be somewhat in fear of taking the individual students as the basis from which we shall determine our educational procedure. If it could be done at all, I think I should like to substitute the community for the individual student so to ask the question whether it is possible to get the unity which we are seeking in terms of the community as a whole and in terms of the teaching task as a whole as it appears in the curriculum of the community. Our question is how we can get unity in the cur-

riculum. Well, I think probably we would all agree in the first place (it is very desirable that we should, since it is a truism of modern logic, as I suppose it was of ancient logic) that a thing is understood only so far as it is unified. It makes no difference how much you have it in your mind, it makes no difference how much information you have with regard to it, it makes no difference what you know about it, so far as our logicians have anything to tell us about the nature of thinking their fundamental insight in ancient and modern times is this: To understand is to unify. In so far as the mind is not unified it does not understand, and the one thing to be said about our modern curriculum so far as we find it lacking in unity is just this: It is not an instrument of understanding. In so far as our students have not a unified body of knowledge as a whole they don't understand. In so far as our teachers have not unified their interpretation of experience as a whole, they do not understand the experience. In so far as modern education has become a thing of shreds and patches, has become a thing of departments, groups and interests and problems and subjects, just so far, if logic knows what it is talking about, our modern teaching, our modern curriculum, is not a thing of intelligent insight.

How, then, shall we achieve unity in our teaching? A curriculum is a curriculum; it is a plan of teaching; it is a scheme of instruction only in so far as it is a unified thing. What we have now as a result of our elective manipulation is not education in the sense in which a college of liberal arts understands that term.

The first question is: Can we afford, as the elective system does, to leave the task of unification to the individual student? Can we let the student take his choice of subjects and then leave it with him to work out the unity for himself? I don't think that is on the face of it so absurd a proposition as it seems. After all what you do with these subjects when you put them into the minds of the students is to put them into a mind, at least you suppose you do. I suppose that the underlying premise of all our elective

procedure was that the thing into which you put the studies is a mind. And we trusted that that mind whose dominating law is unification would take those separate things and make of them a unitary scheme. Of course, we know where the elective system failed. It failed in the supposition that the students are active minds, because they are not. They don't function in any active sense, they don't unify in any thorough way. What they do is just to stop when we stop pushing; and nothing happens. The essential difficulty on the part of the college with regard to the American student is that the mind of the American student doesn't work, it just stops when you give it something to do. It is not an active attempt at understanding the experience of the human race, which is what the elective systems suppose it to be.

The mind of the American teacher is not in that sense a mind either. The teacher in the American college can not adequately be described as a person who is attempting to unify the content of human experience. He too is described either in terms of what he doesn't do or in terms of the special limitation of what he does. So I think I shall have to record here my lack of faith in the American student as he is. We can't take him as giving promise of the proper unification of the college curriculum. Then what shall we take? Here it seems to me that the American college faces just the same situation that the American people as a whole face. We have before us the task of making a community. I think the great difficulty, the great problem of our American life is not the problem of the individual, it is the problem of the community, the problem of making out of groups of people genuine, interrelated, interacting, unified spiritual bodies which have some sort of common experience and which live in terms of that experience so that every individual finds the major part of his interests and his experience coming out of the life of the community. I think the question is with regard to our colleges how they can be made into communities. There are not communities enough in terms of our elective system. Can they be made into genuine community enterprises? How

can it be done? I think it must be done. What does the college stand for in the mind of the student? What does he find it to be?

The under-graduate life has certain dominating interests and motives which rather easily make it a single thing which the student can understand and grasp and share in. But what does the college as a thing of the spirit and a thing of the mind mean for him as a unitary thing? Well, if you say it means a place in which he should study, I don't think you have gotten very far, because different people are studying different things and there doesn't seem to be any particular common reason why they should study these different things. The things don't fuse together into any common purpose. I don't believe our boy going to an American college knows very well what you mean when you tell him he ought to study. It is very much like a formal requirement imposed by older people.

What can we put into the community as a principle underlying the demand for study on our part which will give that thing the compelling force of a community drive, a community enterprise, a something by which he as a member of the community must be dominated and carried away and inspired, in terms of which he must live? Here I think we are getting on controversial ground and very dangerous ground, and I imagine our differences would begin to appear very quickly. In the first place, I don't believe you can give him a body of opinions which he must accept. I don't believe that the American college any more than the American community can be dominated by a set of opinions which every member of the community is supposed to accept. Personally, I believe that the very life of a college depends upon the fact that its different members hold different opinions, and upon all essential matters they must not agree in their opinions; they must not agree about religion, they must not agree about politics, they must not agree about morals, they must not agree in matters of taste, they must not agree about anything that is essential to human life as getting the stuff out of which it is made. Any at-

tempt to make a community in those terms seems to me not only false in principle but sure to end very quickly in disaster. In the last resort the college is a place of study, of investigation, of discussion, and when people are studying and investigating and discussing they differ. Difference is the very breath of the spirit of an institution of learning, and I prophesy that any institution which attempts to be an institution of learning in terms of the acceptance of certain points of view, of certain attitudes which are to be taken by all the members of the community—any community that attempts that will end in disaster.

I tell you the one way to make young people differ with you is to try to make them agree with you. Every time you try it you will get what you deserve in terms of your result. You can't take the young American who wants to study or has it in him to study and say, "You come to this community and believe this." He will go to another community or else he will come to yours and believe something else. I know it. That is what he ought to do if he is going to be a person who thinks.

Just here, if I may be allowed to remark on what was said last night, I think we must not take too seriously the suggestion that we should try to repeat the experience of the war. The analogy of the war is a rather dangerous one for time of peace, and I think we had better beware of it. For a long time we have been seeking in time of peace the moral equivalent of war. We want that in our education. But there is something to be remembered; namely, the moral equivalent of war is hell. You can't escape it. If you get or try to get in time of peace the sort of unification of a community which is necessary in time of war, you will get war over again. Let's look back on it and say the truth. In time of war you fool yourself, in time of war you hate, in time of war you commit people to ideas and notions which they don't really believe, in time of war you use ideas and statements of ideas as tools and instruments with which to fight, in time of war you lie for the sake of the victories to be gained. We can't organize intellectual communities on

any such basis in time of peace. You have got to organize in time of peace not in terms of ideas which everybody accepts as the truth but in terms of certain common enterprises in which everybody takes part, not as one who accepts a dictum but as one who shares in an attempt. So I say again, what is the attempt? What is the attempt to be made by the college which has enough in it to seize upon all the members of the community and drive them frantic with the zeal for this common thing for which the community stands? Well, now, I feel as though I were about to drop my scale, because after all peace isn't so exciting as war, after all it isn't easy to get something into the class room that is as exciting as a football game—but that is what we are after, that is what we have got to get.

The only thing I can give you, the only think I can give to students is this: A college should be a place in which every member of the community is attempting to understand what goes on in human life, and I shall give as the limiting principle of a college of liberal arts this: I don't believe anybody has a right to be in the college of liberal arts either as teacher or pupil whose primary interest is not that he is trying to understand human experience as a whole, that is, trying to get hold of human life as an enterprise of the human spirit and to so construe it in terms of his mind that he can take his part better in that enterprise. If we could put that in terms of an examination that is the kind of examination I would like. If any boy or girl wanted to engage in the task of understanding human experience as a whole so he might live it better, I would take him in. If we found out he didn't want that, I would put him out. If anybody has a subject he studies or wants to teach in such a way that it gives better understanding of what men are trying to do and ought to be trying to do, if he has a subject that he can teach and wants to teach in that way, I would have him as a teacher in a liberal college; if he hasn't, I would put him out, he hasn't any place.

There is our question. Can we as communities which are engaged in the liberal enterprise of attempting to take all

of human experience into some sort of unified understanding, can we take our communities, these little communities that on the whole we represent, can we take these few hundreds of individuals, students and pupils and fuse them altogether into some such single thing by which the whole community may be dominated? Well, now, if we are to do it, I think there is only one way to do it, and that is just to do it. I for one am ready to pledge my faith. If necessary I am willing to chuck the whole body of machinery overboard and start again.

In this connection I think there is a very notable experiment being made, the experiment at Reed College. I don't know how that experiment is going to turn out, I don't suppose they do there either, but what I am sure of is that at Reed College they are very deliberately and very explicitly trying just this thing. Whether they succeed or not in making it go, at least I am pretty sure they are trying the right thing. If they don't make it go this time perhaps they will make it go the next; if they don't make it go perhaps something else will make it go. At any rate in one form or another they seem to me to be trying the essential thing.

From another point of view, may I state what I think that thing needs? I should be willing to state the using of curriculum in these two terms: It seems to me this curriculum should fall into two parts; the first is the part of taking a representative body of knowledge, representative of the whole field of knowledge in all its aspects, the science which gives a description of the natural process which surrounds and determines human life; the arts, which express its value of experiences, including literature; the history, which gives an account of the development of human life; the social and economic study which give an account of its institutions; the philosophy which gives an account of the value and motives and the underlying beliefs and presuppositions upon which the whole thing rests. I believe there is one part of our curriculum where there should be selection, proper selection from those fields and that all students

should take the same subjects as so selected. In my own opinion it is pretty essential that in the first two years of the college course we should have a completely required curriculum, or practically that. There might be the substitution of one language for another, but it seems to me that in our first two years we should do as they are doing at Reed now and doing at some other places to a very large extent. We should take the outline of human experience as determined by our various studies of it, approaching it from the different aspects, and we as a college faculty should make such selection from those studies as to make by the combining of the selection something like an outline view of human experience.

Now, of course, we wouldn't give all of human experience. Naturally we would give only selections. But we would give those selections in such a way as to make them fit in together, one with the other, and to make them all round out together into a single scheme. I would like to see every Freshman and Sophomore in a college course engaged in the same piece of work from the beginning of that first year to end of the second, and I would like to have him know that the community of which he is a member regards it as essential for the sort of intelligence in which the community believes, that he as a member of the community shall master that material, shall get started on that enterprise. We are not going to make him believe he has finished the enterprise, we are not going to make him believe in those two years that his teachers tell him what there is to be known about human experience. It seems to me the first or one of the first things we need to do along that line is to diminish the importance of the teacher. There is another failure and folly of our elective system. We have altogether exalted the importance of the teacher too much. We have made pupils think that what the teacher has to tell them is a very important matter. I think that what we ought to tell our pupils is that what a teacher thinks about a subject is probably very unimportant. If I am trying to teach philosophy what difference does it make to

a student what I think about the problem of evil or the nature of the categorical judgment? If he wants to get an opinion that is important about the problem of evil or the categorical judgment, he can go to Aristotle or Comte or Hegel or Spinoza or Lotze, let him go to somebody that knows something about it, not a teacher in an American college. (Laughter).

Let us realize that there are hundreds and thousands of us all over this American country who will never be heard of after a few years are gone past; it is not our business to produce students like ourselves, it is the business of the American college to stop the sentimental hero worship in which teachers have gloated, having impressed themselves on the plastic minds so they stick there forever and keep it a mediocre thing as long as it exists. It is the business of the teacher to introduce students, if he can, to the great minds of human history, get students acquainted with literature.

One of the greatest criticisms that is to be made of the American college today is that it doesn't teach pupils to read. They think they will learn it from their teacher. But what you and I must know is that our job in those first two years at least is to get the lot of young people interested in the task of trying to understand what human life is and then get them introduced to the great body of human experience and human wisdom and human knowledge and human thought that has been coming down through the ages and is going on into the ages, to get them engaged in the task of sharing that, not taking what we can give them.

Now I believe it is the task of the first two years for us to say to the boys and girls, "You have got to engage in that enterprise, and nothing else, you are not going to study chemistry, physics, economics, bookkeeping or anything else, you are going to try to become a part in the great endeavor of the human mind to understand itself and its world. You are all to be engaged in the same piece of work."

Then I would not simply as a concession but also as a matter of principle, if they have done that during the first

two years, turn each one of them loose into some special field and let him find out what the thing really feels like when you are doing something for yourself. Of course they will all go into their separate groups and try to learn what the technique of thinking is. At the same time it seems to me they ought to be kept with enough of the common work, with the sort of Senior course to which Dr. Kelly referred, to teach the whole community bound together by the single enterprise, which, after all, is the enterprise of an institution of learning and insight, the enterprise of understanding.

If you will let me say a word in conclusion, I will tell you what is the trouble with the whole business. (I think I have given five or six explanations already of what is the chief trouble and I want to give another.) It is the way we do. Of course, the chief trouble with our teaching—you as Presidents of colleges know it, and I know it, everybody that deals with American life knows it—today is that we haven't anything to teach. That is why we teach chemistry and physics and botany and economics and mathematics and all the rest; we haven't wisdom to teach. We don't know what to say about life today as our fathers did. We haven't got the whole body of the curriculum bound together in terms of a single enterprise in which we are engaged, in which we could take our pupils. You know as well as I do whether you are trying to hold on to the whole scheme or not, you know as well as I do that under the rush of modern time with the incoming of the big bodies of knowledge and the new forms of intellectual technique that the old structure of interpretation of human life is wrecked, it has lost its unity, it has lost its power. America today, like the countries of Europe and the rest of the world, America particularly, doesn't know what to think about any of the essential features of our human experience. We are lost and mixed up and bewildered, and if you ask what is the matter with our young people, it is just because they know it in their bones, whether they know it with their minds or not, we haven't got a gospel, a philosophy, we haven't in

the proper sense of a term a religion to give them. So we touch it here and we touch it there and try to make them believe things that we don't believe ourselves, and we try to make them do things that we don't know are essential. We are lost in the maze that faces us today as an American people of gathering together again the fragments of our experience, the theories of our life, the parts of our knowledge, and making out of them again a scheme of life by which people may go on in some sort of commands of their old faith.

And so I say to the members of this body what seems to me to be very, very important. I think upon us very largely rests this responsibility, for in my opinion the small college in America more than any other institution is going to meet that demand. We are committed to the liberal enterprise. In our institutions we have to do a thing that it seems impossible to do and yet which must be done if this American life of ours is to be lived with anything like success, and in the carrying on of that work the small college, the small liberal college, stands as the greatest hope of our people.

I will tell you what our task is. Our task as the leaders and as members of small colleges is to engage again in the attempt to make a philosophy of life or a religion, if that is what you call it, a scheme of values, a settled belief, a formulation of questions, a feeling of enterprises and appreciations out of which human life may be made a significant and beautiful and splendid thing. That is what we have got to do chiefly in our colleges and we mustn't try to give that to our students. What we must try to do with the youngsters that come up is to take them in with us and tell them we are trying to make it and they must try to make it and the college must seethe with the enthusiasm of that attempt to make out of life a beautiful and significant thing. But what is essential to all of that is the making of teachers, teachers for American youth. We haven't teachers enough, teaching has fallen away into mere instruction. We have got to make teachers who can take hold of the

youth of America and lead them into the beauty and significance and meaning not only of American life but of human life as an essentially beautiful thing.

MISS MARGARET C. ALEXANDER

It is a very great privilege to have a part in this conference on the Organization of the College Curriculum—and it is for me a novel experience to sit above the salt, as it were. Heretofore my associations in this connection have always been with the student. I have been for some time very much interested in the growing recognition, on the part of faculty and student alike, of the need for such changes in our educational method as will lead away from the old hit-or-miss practice of steeping the student's mind in apparently unrelated bits of information—what I heard a student at Swarthmore College call “a heterogeneous conglomeration of dissociated miscellanies”—to an organized plan of study, designed to develop the student's critical faculties, to stimulate his intellectual curiosity, to vitalize his studies by linking them up with the world he lives in, and last of all, to make him see the sum total of human knowledge as a unified whole, made up not of isolated but of distinctly interrelated fields. The adoption at Smith College and at Swarthmore College of the English system of reading for honors, is a healthy manifestation of this tendency to unify the curriculum. The introduction of such courses as that in Contemporary Civilization at Columbia University, a Freshman compulsory course with the express purpose of “raising for consideration the insistent problems of the present,” and of the Freshman course at Amherst in social and economic institutions which is designed (and here I quote President Meiklejohn) “to make students at the very beginning aware of the moral, social and economic scheme—the society—of which they are members” will do something to supply the vitality which a group of students from a dozen or more colleges in the East and Middle West, assembled in conference during these last Christmas holidays,

accused the college of lacking. The indictment of the college of today is grave—to cram minds rather than to make them, to stifle intellectual curiosity rather than to awaken it, and to detach young men and women from life rather than to give them an earnest consciousness of their relation to it—this is serious; but it would be even more so if it were not for such evidence of dissatisfaction on the part of the students as the discussions at the conference of which I speak, and the remarkable curriculum proposals made by the Student Curricular Committee of Barnard College last year. The correctives suggested by the students bear the ear-marks of immaturity, but they are none the less significant. It remains for a body like this, of men and women who have given years of attention to the question of college and university education, to work out a practical program of curricular reform.

So much for the general problem. I hesitate to proceed, for in running over a collection of addresses made by the speaker before me on the question of "The Liberal College" I found these words: "Courses are the chimeras of an imagination perverted by the categories of mechanics." And yet the burden of my paper this morning is a course, a course in international relations. Montesquieu has said, "Knowledge humanizes mankind, and reason inclines to mildness, but prejudices eradicate every tender disposition." And yet perhaps in no other branch of human relations, not even excluding domestic politics, are prejudices more rampant than in the relations of those aggregates of human beings we call nations. Here crowd-thinking gets in its prettiest, or ugliest, work. Blind obedience to a shibboleth leads men to cast aside reason and, under pressure of crisis, to indulge in the stupidest and most anti-social of human performances—war. It is true that most college students, like most men and women, if asked whether they considered war desirable, would answer in the negative. Some would add in the next breath, however, somewhat in the strain of Santayana, when he talks of the dilemma democracy and culture create for each other, that war can never

be abolished "until some purified and high-bred race succeeds the promiscuous bipeds that now blacken the planet." Others, making the wish father to the thought, will find great cause for optimism in each fresh recruit that is brought into the pacifist fold, and will think that if they repeat the Coué formula "Ce passe" with sufficient faith, they will wake up some fine morning and find war a thing of the past. Peace, however, is not an end in itself. Nor will outlawing war or merely calling it undesirable, or mad, or criminal, put an end to it. Peace is a realizable ideal only as the conditions which make for war are faced and dealt with. It is to make known these conditions and to inquire into possible ways of removing them that a systematic and scientific study of international relations is desirable.

International relations are, of course, already treated in some form or other in a great many colleges, but the treatment is either incidental to the general subject under consideration or limited in approach. Courses in modern European history almost without exception deal with such questions as the rise of nationalism, the development of modern imperialism, and the wars of the last century and a quarter and their causes. Economics courses may deal with problems of international commerce and finance and may indicate the dependence of the nations upon each other for the development of their industries and the exchange of their produce. International organization occasionally receives some treatment at the hands of the department of political science, and international law and diplomacy are a well established and pretty highly developed field of study. In some colleges specific phases of the wider problem, such as Latin-American relations or the Far East, are made the subjects of a course, but these, valuable as they are, cannot be considered a substitute for a general course in international relations. In their relation to the larger problem, and in the incompleteness of understanding of that problem which they furnish, they remind me of an International Relations Club I knew of last year which had chosen Mexico for its year's discussion. By Christmas it had reached the Aztec

civilization. Whether it ever got to Obregon and the relations of the United States to Mexico is a question.

Because of the inadequate treatment of international relations in the college curriculum, International Relations Clubs have been organized in some eighty-five or ninety colleges and universities, which meeting every two weeks or month as they do, help to call to the students' attention problems which the busy life on the college campus is likely to drive from his horizon. But this sort of approach to the problems of international relations cannot be other than spasmodic and incomplete, and it is a rare club which can keep a thread of common argument running thru the discussions of the year. Moreover, there are less than a hundred of these clubs as against the seven hundred odd colleges in the country. Finally they suffer the evils of all organization suggested in the story of the devil who, when asked by one of his imps, as they passed a man clutching a bit of Truth, whether he did not fear that man, answered "No, indeed, I'll just teach him to organize."

Neither clubs nor existing classes, therefore, begin to handle adequately the teaching of international relations. To ensure a systematic and unified treatment of the subject a course should be offered which will correlate modern history, economics, geography, international law and diplomacy, anthropology and social psychology, and in the light of these subjects show up in their true significance the fundamental problems in the relations between nations. A whole-year course might begin with the history of international relations, running thru the rise of nationalism, political and cultural, and with a consideration of its psychological basis, the wars produced by a competitive nationalism, and the economic motive introduced as the world became more and more highly industrialized and a new kind of imperialism became part of the big industrial nations' foreign policies. A discussion of the economic imperialism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries might follow, and in explanation a nice piece of work in economic geography might be done here.

It has been said that "the earth's geography, its inexorable climates with their flora and fauna, make a playground for the human will which should be well surveyed by any statesman who wishes to judge and act, not fantastically, but with reference to the real situation. Geography is a most enlightening science. In describing the habitat of man it largely explains his history." It might be added that it largely explains international relations as well. International relations are, to a great extent, a study in geography: human geography, describing the characteristics and manner of living of the races of the world; political geography, the territorial divisions of the world and the problems involved in maintaining these divisions; and economic and commercial geography, the economic resources of the nations, their industries, and the interdependence of the nations in respect to these industries. If the student were set to making maps and charts showing the principal industries of the world, the location of raw materials and foodstuffs in respect to national boundaries, transportation facilities and, as in the case of coal and iron, in respect to each other, and the important trade routes and markets of the world, the fact of the economic interdependence of the nations would be established without further comment, and the international strife resulting from the anomaly of politically independent nations in an economically interdependent world would be better understood.

The second semester of the course might be spent in studying international commerce and trade, and international finance, including in the former a consideration of preferential and discriminatory tariffs and their consequences, legitimate and illegitimate methods of promoting foreign trade, and so forth, and in the latter the alliance between export trade and foreign investment, the international complications arising from the protection of capital invested abroad, and the whole chain of problems connected with foreign investments, concessions and the "open door."

The student who had actually grasped the full significance of the facts so far might easily be plunged into a slough of

despond by the evidence of anarchy and strife in the relations of nations in this twentieth century, and pessimism and despair might overwhelm him if it were not for the possibilities of solution that lie in the whole field of international co-operation. The course might close with a review of past experiments in international co-operation, judicial and administrative, and with a consideration of possible future developments, whether in the direction of a permanent international organization such as the League of Nations or an association of nations, or of disconnected international boards and commissions to regulate international trade and commerce, finance, the distribution of raw materials and foodstuffs, and the thousand and one other practical questions on which the nations are likely to split.

It is obvious that a course of this nature is not, and cannot be, the work of any one department, but is a pie in which the historian, the economist, the political scientist, the psychologist and the international lawyer must each have a finger. One of two methods might be followed in conducting such a course: either it might be an interdepartmental affair, the historian covering his part, the economist his, the psychologist his and the international lawyer his, or it might be put under any one of the departments mentioned but given according to a carefully prepared syllabus, which would prevent undue emphasis on any particular phase of the subject. The administrative difficulties associated with the former method are so great, and the value to the student of a course so conducted is so questionable, that the latter is probably the sounder way. If, in the case of a compulsory course in a university or large college, there would have to be several sections, the scheme adopted at Columbia in the course in Contemporary Civilization might be followed, and the sections turned over to the various departments concerned. The section conducted by a member of the department of history might emphasize the history of international relations and neglect the economic and legal aspects of the subject, and so on, in the case of the economist, the political scientist and the lawyer. But this is inevitable. It is hoped

that the syllabus would offset this difficulty so far as possible.

So much for a course in international relations. Herbert Spencer had a feeling that, if science could be introduced into the colleges, the students would develop scientific minds. Unfortunately the evidence does not support his belief. Nor is it more likely that if international relations could be introduced into the college curriculum, wars would cease. War as an institution has become firmly rooted in human society for two reasons: first, because it offers expression to impulses or instincts which in normal times are considered anti-social and must be repressed; and, secondly, because a complex system of international relations has developed without the simultaneous development of the machinery for adjusting those relations. Just as anarchy in the smaller units of society, whether the clan or tribe or nation, led to internal strife, so lack of organization, law and order, or what you will, in the relations of nations must result in war. The first of these tendencies to war, the instinctive, will not yield to a rational presentation of the facts, but the second, and I believe it is the more compelling and provides the situations which the instinctive responses take advantage of to promote and prolong the struggle, can be made to bow to reason. Bertrand Russell declares that "education should have two objects: first, to give definite knowledge, and secondly, to create those mental habits which will enable people to acquire knowledge and form sound judgments for themselves. The first of these we may call information, the second intelligence." Knowledge of the facts can develop that intelligence which will free men from the prejudices on which wars thrive. It can also reveal the problem of the adjustment of our international relations in all its complexity, and break down the easy optimism that pins its faith on a simple slogan or formula and cries out with an air of conviction "Peace" when there is none. The establishment of a smoothly functioning international system is an eminently practical problem, and one, like the reorganization of our social system, involving atten-

tion to an infinite number of details. The men and women who leave our colleges must be prepared to do their part in working out these details. They must also have freed themselves from the shackles of prejudice and dogma which stand in the way of a healthy and far-seeing international consciousness. We have faith that the truth will set men free. I believe that the truth about international relations can eventually set men free from the scourge of war.

PRESIDENT R. F. SCHOLZ

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

My present predicament calls to mind the experience of the two middle aged English women who were visiting with Disraeli, the rival of Gladstone. Unable to settle an argument regarding the difference between misfortune and catastrophe, they referred the problem to Disraeli for settlement. He replied that he thought he could best settle the controversy by a concrete illustration. "If," said he, "Mr. Gladstone were to fall into the Thames, that would be a misfortune, but if somebody were to come along and rescue Mr. Gladstone out of the Thames, that would be a catastrophe." I regret that it should be your misfortune to have to listen to some inadequate *ex tempore* remarks after the incisive, logical and illuminating address of President Meicklejohn, and I regret even more that I should be faced with the catastrophe of attempting to telescope into the remarks of a few minutes our two years' experience at Reed College in our educational pioneering.

I wonder if it is an accident that recently there were published almost synchronously certain best sellers such as Bryce's "Modern Democracies," Wells' "Outline of History," Thompson's "Outline of Science," "Easy Lessons in Einstein,"—and "Main Street." Surely it is a sign and symptom of the increasing number and the widening interest of our adult reading public and, more important still, an indication that we are more and more consciously and

deliberately rousing ourselves out of our complacent provincialisms in an effort to really understand our world and to achieve a truly synthetic point of view.

There is another significant fact which we cannot afford to ignore—namely, the astounding increase during the past two decades in the number of our high school students and graduates. The problem of numbers will be an increasing issue in our programs for the educational reform of our colleges and universities. We should wake up to the fact that education today is not only a question of public service but that it is also a great co-operative national enterprise, and that the time has come for a new division of labor between our educational institutions. We must no longer think of our own particular institution as an independent or denominational college in isolation. The quantitative problem of democracy in education calls for reconsideration of the scope and function of our universities, colleges and professional schools; while the qualitative problem of education for an intelligent democracy raises the question of the type of education and the proper selection of the kind of student who can best profit by these various types of educational programs. I agree with President Meiklejohn that our fundamental concern is with the mind of the individual student and that the crux of our educational situation today is the four year liberal college of arts and sciences. This will undoubtedly involve the question of limitation of numbers. It is an increasingly difficult problem to make sure of a wise investment in our human materials. Against the criticism that occasionally we shall lose budding genius by exclusion, it is only fair to point out the enormous wastage of the human wealth in our educational institutions and the high mortality rate of students due to the extension of standardized, impersonal mass education and to our failure to select the right kind of student for the particular type of educational institution.

I also agree with President Meiklejohn that a liberal college is not as much an institution as a community of like-minded human beings engaged in a common intellectual adventure. Scholarship, even culture, is after all not merely

a thing of individual minds, both involve membership in a community and are the outcome of co-operative thinking and co-operative living. They can be best attained under conditions of responsible freedom by a common intellectual experience based on recognition of the differences of personality, of the variations of humankind.

With these considerations in mind, we have been undertaking at Reed College an educational experiment based on an honest effort to disregard old historic rivalries and hostilities between the sciences and the arts, between professional and cultural subjects, and, may I add, between the formal chronological cleavage between graduate and undergraduate work. We are attempting to provide the opportunities and facilities for the individual student to achieve the fundamentals of effective, contemporary-minded living and of the humanized liberal profession, and, as a necessary outcome and by-product of our integrated, unified four years program, of those qualities and attitudes of mind which distinguish genuine culture.

I think you will agree with me that three of the most important problems facing us today are the reconciliation of democracy (and I may add Christianity) with our industrial order, of democracy and nationalism on the basis of self-respecting equality and moral autonomy with some form of world organization and world order; and last of all (particularly in view of the alarmist and pernicious influence of certain well-known, recent best sellers), the problem raised by the last great meeting of East and West with its portentous problem of the contact of races and cultures of various levels in an increasingly industrialized and democratic world. In all of these fields the drift towards the newer humanism is unmistakable. Economics is no longer merely a process of production but more and more a matter of human government involving the due recognition of the human equation and of the democratic truth that equality of opportunity is fundamental to true freedom. Fortunately or unfortunately, too, many of our great economic problems, national and international, have to be

settled politically. Similarly in the matter of international relations, one of our difficulties is the survival of the 18th century conception of the state and of the survival and intensification of century-old hatreds and prejudices. However, the state is being humanized, moralized, and the imperialism of exploitation and domination is gradually being transformed into temporary trusteeship against the time when the backward peoples of the earth shall have reached their political majority by the progressive extension of liberty and self-government. Most important of all, the problem of racial and cultural contacts and rivalries is ultimately and in the last analysis not so much a matter of biological difference or of the clash of economic interests as of a proper understanding of the habits of mind, mental attitudes and outlook that have been centuries in the making. Historic-mindedness, clear thinking and sympathy, are needed, along with a proper realization of the scientific facts underlying racial and cultural problems. Certain present-day movements and tendencies—not restricted by any means to Oregon—should impress upon us the duty of making plain to our citizens that Americanism is not to be achieved by force and compulsion in the realm of ideas and ideals and that we must not confuse external uniformity and conformity with what a Frenchman has so well called “a sacred union of hearts.” The great task and opportunity of the Liberal College, it seems to me, is to make and keep our young men and women fit for freedom and for free institutions.

Now then, just what has been our program and policy at Reed? Forgetting historical antagonisms and more recent controversies and rivalries, we have attempted to make a fresh analysis of present-day conditions, tendencies and needs. On the basis of this analysis, the new Reed curriculum has been planned as a four year program, including vacations, and is intended for a residential, liberal, co-educational college, limited in attendance to five-hundred students in order not to jeopardize the quality of instruction. Our new program is, of course, tentative. Its pos-

sible success will depend on the morale and esprit de corps of the teaching force and on the attitude and co-operation of the students. Administrative considerations should be and are being subordinated to educational policy.

One of our first tasks is to eliminate the bookkeeping attitude towards education. We are trying to think no longer in terms of credits and units and three or four or five hour courses and are doing away with the water tight department system in favor of divisional groups in Literature and Language, History and Social Science, Mathematics and Natural Science, and Philosophy and Psychology. The student is encouraged to look upon his work as forming one unified course of study, and is made to feel that with his freshman year he enters upon a four year program all the various parts of which are closely bound up with one another. During the first two years he pursues an integrated course of study with differentiated but correlated reading and conferences, and with a further possible deviation accordingly as his primary interests lie in the field of Mathematics and Science or in that of Letters and Social Science. Instead of a freshman orientation and survey course, informational in nature, or a formal course a few hours a week devoted to teaching the student how to study and how to think, it is our plan to devote the work of the first two years to an examination of the fundamental basis and historical backgrounds of contemporary civilization, as they can be studied in the great representative fields of knowledge. The different ways of approach, methods of work, viewpoint or interpretation in identical or allied fields presented on a year's basis, the careful selection of a faculty composed of instructors who, while engaged in private research, are primarily teachers and who have had very different training and who hold differing opinions and viewpoints, and collateral and interrelated reading in the modern languages—all these tend to do away with the police attitude between students and faculty and to provoke thought and discussion after the fashion of Socrates "Think-shop." Lectures are few; the conference method, by small groups

and individuals, predominates.—Education is viewed as a co-operative process by discussion and consent. On that basis, an appeal is made not to make sure of minimum requirements but of maximum voluntary effort on the part of both students and faculty. The use of the textbook is reduced to a minimum, and we have had gratifying success with supervised suggested readings during the summer vacation. Enthusiastic co-operation of instructors is, of course, necessary, and frequent meetings are held of what are in the main separate “crews” of freshman and sophomore instructors. Under the new scheme, except in a limited number of cases, professors and assistant professors are given an opportunity to meet with small groups and with the individual students during the entire year, making unnecessary the usual artificial advisory systems by making it possible for the divisional faculty groups to be of great service in helping the individual student to a wise choice of a major interest when he comes to the end of the sophomore year. Incidentally, it helps to build up, also, a sound, self-respecting honor spirit and intellectual camaraderie.

We have worked out for the first two years a unified course of study which is elastic enough to permit the student to express and cultivate legitimate interests of his own, in the place of the old haphazard elective courses. The elective principle is preserved but is made to subserve the synthetic idea of an interrelated and integrated curriculum. The work of the freshman year is given up to a consideration of the evolution of man in nature and society, man's biological and social heritage, and his achievements in literature and the arts; and in lieu of the old formal logic course there is substituted an introduction to mathematical analysis and of the basic conceptions and theories of exact science. In connection with the work in the History of Civilization, students are given the choice of reading in government and law, in economic and social institutions, or in cultural history, and in small supplementary conference sections this reading is correlated with an intensive study of some one phase of institutional development (political,

economic, social), or of culture (literature, art, music). The year's work in Biology, incidentally, provides an opportunity for a thorough preliminary study of the principles and processes of heredity and environment in their human applications, which serves to throw light on one of the very first problems met with in the History of Civilization, viz. the relation between race and language and culture. (I am simply trying to emphasize the point that these are not the ordinary survey courses.) This unified course of study during the freshman year is intended to provide the necessary perspective for a sound understanding of the modern world, to demonstrate the fundamental unity of mankind and of nature, and to make possible an understanding appreciation of the diversity of the contributions made by individuals and peoples to that totality which we call contemporary civilization. To an intensive study of this contemporary civilization, again in certain representative fields, the work of the sophomore year is devoted. As in the freshman year, the attempt is again made to correlate and integrate into a unified course of study for the year the literary, historical and social, and scientific approaches to the common field of study. For those whose primary interests lie in Mathematics and the Natural Sciences, the usual close correlations are preserved and emphasized.

While elastic enough to make possible the thorough undertaking of the necessary fundamental work in the natural sciences in proper sequence, the idea behind the unified work of the first two years is, as has been stated, to lay a foundation for the fundamentals of contemporary twentieth century living from the standpoint of citizenship and of a truly liberal professional career.

Though chronologically a part of the third year's work, the junior "half-course" in Citizenship and International Relations is really but the culmination and rounding out of the work of the first two years. It is an attempt to interpret to our students in their junior year when they are both mature enough and near enough the voting age to take an intelligent interest, the history and meaning of the United

States in its American, European, and world setting, as supplied by the study of the History of Civilization during the freshman and sophomore years.

At the end of the sophomore year, when the student is presumably sufficiently oriented to make a wise and happy choice for his real life interest, the divisional group of the faculty, who know him personally and whom he has had every opportunity of knowing himself, take counsel with each student individually and plan with him a unified course of study. The work of the last two years is intended to lay the broad foundation for a humanized liberal profession. We have no right to take that interest out of the life of the student. Scholarship and culture, the dignity of labor, and a life of service, should not be strangers, nor placed in any artificial or dangerous antithesis. It does not make much difference to us after this how many formal courses he attends. We are interested only in seeing that the student's time is wisely and fully occupied. So far as the junior and senior years are concerned, the College leaves to the discretion of the student and his instructors the allotment of time to the various studies and the type of instruction. The number of hours he spends in the classroom is not significant; neither is it required of instructors that they meet their classes for a certain fixed number of hours each week. In every possible way, the work is made elastic, and the student is thrown on his own resources under wise guidance, but on his own responsibility. The correlation which is so conspicuous a feature of the first two years is preserved and reinforced in the last two. By various methods, the student carries on parallel investigations in allied fields. At the end of the junior year an examination tests the knowledge of the student within his chosen field and allied fields and his fitness to enter upon the work of the senior year. This Junior Examination, as well as the examination at the end of the senior year, are not based on "courses" pursued by the student, but are intended to disclose the measure of proficiency and intellectual power attained by the student in the treatment of problems

which fall within the field of study in which he has been engaged.

And as the outcome—or as the by-product, if you please,—of this four years of community experience, there are developed and cultivated those qualities and attitudes of mind which betray the presence of real culture and scholarship. First of all, clean, straight, independent thinking and thinking *through*, which recognizes the difference between authentic and authoritative knowledge. Secondly, constructively critical, synthetic, historic-mindedness. This is perhaps one of our greatest needs, as witness our gropings and floundering in the present world situation and the costliness of our intellectual unpreparedness in undertaking an enlightened constructive foreign policy. Other illustrations from recent history abound. There was a nation that thought the shortest way to Paris was through Belgium, only to discover that it was the longest way in the end. There were imported into Russia recently a set of Western ideas that fitted neither the Russian background nor Russian peasant experience—at what a cost! Thirdly, scientific-mindedness and, above all, the scientific spirit—the passion for truth, the mental adventure of discovery, precision in the use of terms, the ability to distinguish between true and false in theories and hypotheses, the caution which guards against generalizations and hasty judgments.

Perhaps the most valuable experience in the four years—giving unity to the whole course of study and helping the student to clarify and formulate his own ideas concerning the nature of experience and knowledge, is the opportunity during the senior year to participate in a weekly two hour colloquium, in which small groups of students with major interests in the various fields are given an opportunity to thresh and test out the various interpretations of contemporary civilization and society with which they have come into contact during the college course and to think their way through to a philosophy of life—*their own*.

Enough has been said, perhaps, to give you some notion of the program for a four year unified course of study

which is now being tried out at Reed. This plan of meeting the diversified interests of students by individual work rather than by highly specialized courses naturally leads to a reduction of the number of courses offered. As the mechanism for improving the correlation and integration of the various subjects is perfected by increasing experience, it is hoped that duplication and overlapping of courses will be eliminated and that the number of lectures and class meetings will be still further reduced, with an increase in individual, voluntary student effort. A further economy of time and effort—to say nothing of an increased efficiency in teaching methods—is effected by an interesting experiment in our teaching of Literature, Modern Language, and Composition, which is giving every promise of success. After 1924, all students are expected to present a reading knowledge of French or German for entrance. Except in certain work restricted to juniors and seniors, all courses in Language are devoted exclusively to the purpose of enabling a student to read,—conversation and composition are eliminated. No specifically English, French, or German courses are offered; literary courses are division courses. The work in Latin, and in Greek beyond that of the first year, is purely literary. During the entire college course, students do collateral reading in the language which they present for admission in connection with all their courses. We have no composition course as such. Instruction in Latin and oral English in connection with all the work of the freshman and sophomore year, is given by conference, individual or in groups. The saving in time and effort thus effected is put to good use. Beginning with the freshman year and increasing in amount progressively with each succeeding year, each student is allowed a certain amount of time for independent reading on a year's basis, under the supervision of some one professor for additional reading or laboratory work in connection with some one of the representative fields of knowledge of his own choice. We believe that the merely acquisitive process of information should be left increasingly to the individual student's own responsibility

and that the graduate attitude can be progressively developed during the four year college course by giving the individual students time and opportunity for developing themselves through independent reading and inquiry, through critical study, and, if at all promising, through creative work. From the beginning to the end of the college course the student is taught that his primary aim should be to acquire the power to think for himself, to seek out his own problems, his own sources of information, to make up his own bibliography, and to read widely.

I have more than imposed upon your patience. To conclude, my plea is simply the plea not merely to humanize knowledge but to humanize our institutions, and our teaching, so that we may help to make men and women not only of knowledge but of understanding and good will.

PRESIDENT GEORGE B. CUTTEN

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

In discussing or trying to discuss the curriculum, especially from a functional standpoint, if I understand what that means, I am reminded of something that came out in the papers about six months ago on the Einstein theory; it was as follows:

"Twinkle, twinkle little star,
How I wonder where you are,
High up in the sky you shine,
But according to Einstein
You are not where you pretend,
But you're just around the bend;
And your sweet seductive ray
Has been leading men astray
All these years. Oh, little star
Don't you know how bad you are!"

That is the way I feel when I start to discuss the curriculum. One thing has been agreed upon this morning, and this thing we all agree upon: It is somewhat of a maze,

tion by function. The reason is because it is an experimentally when we take it from the standpoint of organization; when we talk about our curriculum we say, "Well, what have they done in England, France, or Germany?" We find there is nothing in the world which compares with our liberal arts college. We have divided the curriculum horizontally; criticisms have frequently been made, and brought out both by the last speaker and Dr. Meiklejohn that there is a difference between the Sophomore and Junior years; in other words, we are finishing our preparatory work in the first two years and then we start on university work in the second two years.

I do not see, Mr. Chairman, how it is possible for us ever to have any unity in our curriculum so long as we have a division of that kind. What the answer is going to be I don't know; whether we shall adopt a system which we see has been creeping in with the junior college so as to make a sharp division there, whether we shall adopt the system whereby we shall divide the curriculum at that point and finish the preparatory work and make a sharp dividing line before we take up university work, or whether we shall continue in what we call the college, a term we use differently from any other country; and try to unify what evidently never was intended to go together.

The second observation I wish to make, and I shall speak very briefly because there is very little time, if President Meiklejohn will permit me to infringe on his domain I'll say a word or two about logic. You needn't be afraid because I know the average college president is not very keen on the subject of logic except that he is more or less interested in an undistributed middle. What I want to bring before you is the old idea, from the standpoint of logic, as to what the college stands for and the new idea from the vocational standpoint. The old idea of liberal arts college was that it provided the major premise, that we had to get all the knowledge we could possibly get into the curriculum. We had to cram the student full of general facts. We sent him out an encyclopedia if at all possible. Then there came

the vocational idea into our colleges which was the application of the minor premise. The general facts and the laws deduced therefrom were the major premises, the applications to definite objects upon which depended success in the world were the minor premises. We all knew the general laws and after some man had applied the minor premise in a particular way we said, "Anybody ought to know that. It's a wonder somebody didn't think of that before." The general law was there before. As soon as that was recognized we came to the conclusion all men would know the application, anybody would know that.

Now it seems to me the problem we are trying to solve at the present time, the problem that they are working out in Reed College, and we are trying to work out in all our colleges, is to try to provide the major premises and also to instill in the students the principles whereby they can apply the minor premises. We say, "No, we don't want you to apply it in college because that is vocational work, you mustn't do that, but we do want you in some way to get hold of the principles so that when you get out you will have the major premise, the general ideas, and you may be in a position to recognize the minor premise and to apply it." How this is to work out we don't know. We will all be very much interested, as we have been already in the presentation of the Reed program, to see how it works out. We recognize it as an experiment. We recognize the principles that are being used there, and we see the application of minor premises which we hope will give us the proper conclusion.

I hope the time has come when we as college presidents can break loose from our traditions. It is very difficult for us to do so, but if we can do so and if some of us can try some other experiment besides the one tried at Reed, we can all take up some feature of the problem, we may organize our colleges in different ways, and so by coming together here and giving the experiences, such as we have had this morning concerning Reed College, we can get here a little from one college and there a little in another college until

we do master the problems that we have before us of instilling into our young people the principles which will lead them to apply, when the time comes, the minor premise to all the problems of life.

I know of nothing from the educational standpoint that is of more interest to us and still at the same time in which we seem to be more helpless than the problem that we have before us today in the functional reorganization of the curriculum, and when we have that solved, education will be a pleasure instead of, as sometimes I am afraid we find it to be in the colleges, a task.

CLOSING DISCUSSION ON THE COLLEGE CURRICULUM

DR. KELLY

The scope of the Commission's work is suddenly greatly enlarged! It has been considering methods of unifying the curriculum. It must concern itself now with the more difficult task of unifying the unifiers!

But after all, the differences, where such appear, are inherent in the method of procedure for this report. They are more apparent than real. If real, they are in minor points. Further exposition and discussion will reveal unity. All speakers subscribe to the functional point of view as desirable. Some seem to think it is not attainable. If really unattainable at present—it will be attained eventually—must the long-suffering student carry the entire load of condemnation? One sometimes hears a feeble pipe of protest from the students—"Worse than the dust though we be,—is the fault ours alone?"

There is also considerable confusion on the part of all the speakers, including the present one, due to failure to hold to a consistent terminology. The term *curriculum* in technical usage means the studies pursued by the individual student. The faculty announces a *program of studies*. A good deal of this discussion has been on the corporate program of studies, not on the curriculum. Part of it has

been on corporate *objectives* and *ideals*, evidently carried over from last night. We have not held to the functional or any other kind of *method of procedure*.

A misunderstanding with reference to the significance of the *group* must especially be cleared up. No suggestion was made to substitute the group for the department. On the contrary, it was suggested that curriculum-mindedness must supplant department-mindedness. The fact that a college has a group system does not mean that students confine themselves to work within the several groups. When taken with some means of distribution, as was suggested, it is a guarantee that they do not do so. The provision always accompanies a liberally functioning group system that the student will take work in *each group*. The advantage of the group system over the system of stipulated course-requirements is that within each group there is some latitude of choice for each student. Each student will still get the historical method and the philosophic method and the scientific method, for he will approach his problem from the point of view of each group. As stated, a few colleges have this system in successful operation for each student enrolled. They have demonstrated its advantages in years of experience. It is not a *theory* but an approved method.

It is well to weigh the implications of some of the suggestions made in the discussion. It is proposed further to complicate the already badly scrambled curriculum by cutting the program of studies of the college into three distinct and separate parts. There must be a horizontal line separating the under-class men from the upper-class men, and then there must be a perpendicular line separating the upper-class men into a right wing and a left wing. There appears to be no center. Is the total result of this new surgery further to endanger the integrity of the four years' college course? Is it to offer aid and comfort to the Junior College on the one side, and the graduate school on the other? Is it in the direction of the disintegration of the liberal college? It appears to be an avowal that only one-fourth of the liberal college can be liberal. The proposal is

made that the first two years of the college course be still conducted on an *academic* basis—that is, with detachment from student interest. The Freshman and Sophomore must pursue what the faculty prescribes and because they prescribe it. Thomas Elyot made the suggestion in 1530, "As far as poetry is concerned, Aristophanes, Homer, Virgil, Ovid, Silvius, Lucian, and Hesiod will suffice until the scholar pass the age of thirteen years."

The suggestion of the first speaker is that there may be a *method* of functional unity throughout the entire college course, that Freshmen may even hazily begin to understand what the enterprise means upon which they have embarked. The suggestion is made, of course, upon the assumption that modern education aims to produce an attitude of mind as well as to give instruction, that even the under-class men have some more or less latent love of mental adventure, that even they may respond to something of life as it is lived, that they may begin to develop standards of appreciation; in a word, that "the days are passed when education meant the mere acquisition of knowledge."

As a matter of fact, in most colleges now the Freshmen and their advisors make decisions as to the science and the language to be included in the individual curriculum, and these decisions are reached in the light of recognized aptitudes, preferences and previous studies. In most colleges the majors are selected in the Sophomore year.

It is a pretty conceit that students have no minds until they have been under the benign influence of the college about two years. The American public school is conducted on the supposition that students have minds. The corporate ideal of the public schools is *social efficiency*, to be attained by the development of *individual initiative, responsibility, and good-will*. The suggestion of the first paper was to carry this ideal over into the college. Let us not indiscriminately denounce the under-class men; let us examine our methods.

The psychological tests applied to Freshmen are conducted on the assumption that students have minds. Not only are measures made of keenness, suppleness, accuracy,

quickness and control by these tests, but special aptitudes are discovered as well, for music, art, mechanics, language and for much else.

The Columbia "Introduction to Reflective Thinking," which Committee G of the Association of University Professors has approved for Freshmen and Sophomores, is conducted on the assumption that students have minds and it proposes to try to develop among them the technique of thinking.

In a recent parade in a state university the arts school was represented by a hearse. For sometime educational coroners have been holding autopsies over the dead body of the liberal college. Perhaps some college students are in a state of suspended animation. The question may be pertinent, "Who killed Cock Robin?" Possibly he was killed by the arrow of some academic sparrow.

The institution in its corporate capacity may wish to express its ideal in terms of the community, or of American citizenship, or even of human brotherhood. All this is admirable but it may be expressed with such haziness and abstractness as to be of little immediate service to the student.

The significant question is not whether you have stated a beautiful aim but whether it is related to the reality with which the student is familiar, whether he is able to grasp its carefully worked-out meaning; whether he gets experience in applying it; whether the studies it provides enter the texture of his mind and come to form a part of his being.

If this happens, his problem becomes social, for one of the presuppositions of American education is that each child is a social person. The suggestion of community thinking is, of course, a necessary implication, as has been pointed out. There has been community thinking in the college from time immemorial. Only we have called it academic thinking. It has quite frequently been weighed in the balance and found wanting. Over and over again it has been demonstrated that if the community or the state stands at all, it stands on the legs of individual persons. The super-

state has never stood at all, for there are not yet enough human legs strong enough to hold it up.* The academic mind in many of its manifestations has been abstracted from the interests of individuals and groups. Even the crude aim of a Sophomore sometimes brings it down to the earth.

A curious illustration of community thinking is reported from last year's Senior class in one of our theological seminaries. The men were so enamored of this process of community thinking and working that upon graduation they volunteered for service in the foreign mission field on condition that the entire group might be assigned to one station. The true missionary motive is service. A new community must be achieved not an old one transplanted or perpetuated. The community as well as the individual is in danger of falling into the fatal trap, when the organ is made inviolable and the function is lost, when quantity and subject-matter are put before quality and interest.

There is plenty of evidence that there are groups of students in most colleges who have worthy interests which may be made the basis of functional unity. Some of these groups are profoundly interested in problems of international relations, as Miss Alexander has pointed out. Others are seriously concerned with the vital problems of industry, and still others with aims that may be stated in terms of scholarly research, as for example, the group of Barnard students and later of Mt. Holyoke students who with great care have produced a college curriculum!

The recently organized National Student Forum is a symptom of the existence among groups of college students of a desire to think and to relate their thinking to what they conceive to be reality. The implication here is that in default of official action thinking must be another "student activity!"

Perhaps I may be allowed to give a few illustrations from the field of religion. It must not be forgotten that 75 per cent of our college students come from the homes of church

*William James once said of a certain faculty: "There is nothing more wonderful than our collective wisdoms, unless it be our individual and concrete ignorances."

members. Before they enter college they have been subjected to the multiplying agencies of religious training. Many of them come to college with profound religious convictions. Eighty per cent of the men who enter the ministry make their decision to do so not in college but before they enter college. They bring with them to the college aspirations and yearnings, embryonic and mute life problems. Shall the college asphyxiate these students. There are religious teachers in every college in this country who when they enter a fraternity house at night will be backed up against the wall and pinned there until the wee small hours answering or attempting to answer the serious questions of these college men upon they consider problems of reality. In one of the great state universities of the Mississippi Valley the enrollment in the curriculum classes of the School of Religion is one-tenth of the total enrollment of the university and is increasing more rapidly than the total enrollment of the university.

A few years ago the students in one of our universities founded during Colonial days offered a petition that the implications and meaning of Christianity be unfolded to them during their college course. The petition was approved by unanimous vote by the Committee on Curriculum of the Board of Trustees. The head of the Department of Philosophy consented to try his hand in working up a course on the Philosophy of Christianity. He became so intensely interested that he spent a year and a half in the preparation of the course. When finally announced it was open as a free elective to Seniors only and was scheduled for 7:55 A.M. during the second half year. Fully one-third of the Senior class of more than 400 students, including all of the Hebrews in the class, registered for the course, and the pressure of interest soon became so great that it was necessary to apply the tutorial system to small groups to meet the demands for discussion. It is sometimes feared that in matters of religion the academic mind has stopped working.

So long as colleges are satisfied to arrange, to tabulate, to chronicle, and even to discover curriculum material with

reference alone to their own corporate ends and ignoring the developing problems of the students themselves, the hearse may continue to be a fit symbol of the liberal college, but when professors are developed who are profoundly concerned in the progress of the student, first, as an individual, and then in his relation to the community and the world, meaning will be put into the curriculum to which the student will joyfully respond.

This is not a plea for early specialization. It is not a plea for vocational training. It does not look toward concentration at the expense of distribution. It is a suggestion that the college deals with persons and that the motive for education must be in the individual. It is a plea for quality; for a hand-made product. It is not enough to say that the liberal college has *not* become vocationalized. It must be said positively that the liberal college *has become motivated*, along with the rest of education and of life. It is a plea for reality. It may be revolutionary for it suggests that the principle of self-determination under the guidance of men who strive to see the problem of the liberal college steadily and see it whole be applied to what has been heretofore called academic. It is not that students cease their effort to attain the scientific and literary and historical and philosophical method, but that they do all this *as a means to the satisfaction of developing intellectual, ethical and social interests*.

Of course, if an individual student does not respond to this functional ideal, if he proves to be hopelessly narrow in his vision and shortsighted in his interests, he can be turned over to the Committee on the Limitation of Enrollment. There are probably professional or vocational schools in which he will feel more at home. But first of all, every student who is competent to pass the modern and multiplying tests of admission should be given an opportunity to achieve a liberal education, which is no less liberal or cultural because it is related to the well springs of his being.

QUOTATION FROM PRESIDENT HIBBEN

Editor's Note. In his annual address on February 22, 1923, at the Alumni Day dinner at Princeton, President John Grier Hibben spoke upon the need to stimulate intellectual curiosity in undergraduates. The extracts from this address which follow are taken from THE NEW YORK TIMES of February 23.

Encouraging Independent Thinking

"We feel that all the institutions of higher learning in America may be criticized to a greater or less extent upon this ground—in all the courses we are continually giving, from the lectures and from textbooks information to our young men and are expecting them to reflect it, to send it back to us in their recitations and examinations. We do not place sufficiently upon them the burden of initiative in thinking their own way into a subject. We do not treat them as independent cooperators with the teacher. They are made to depend too much upon their memory. It is possible to place the heart of a subject in a syllabus, and this may be learned by an alert mind two or three days before an examination and completely forgotten two or three days later.

"The student refuses to burden his mind with these easily memorized facts. But with the plan I am presenting to you, we can say to the undergraduates, Here is a great subject. We will help you but we wish you to go as an explorer into this undiscovered country, to find your bearings there, and to bring back in your hands the wealth and treasure you have been able to gather. At the end of the Senior year, we would give a comprehensive examination on the subject and would say, now you can speak with some authority upon your subject, you have studied it for two years and have given it a great deal of your independent thought. The emphasis would be changed from the absorption of these easily memorized facts to independent and original study of a subject, the very kind of mental process that the college graduates will be expected to carry on later in life.

"This is the question before us, Are we at the present

time doing everything possible to increase the intellectual life of the university? There are three influences today which are urging upon us the consideration of this problem.

Influence of Public Opinion

"The first of these influences is public opinion outside of all universities in this country and yet directed upon the conduct of the higher institutions of learning. This opinion, as we know, is in a large measure inarticulate. It does not find ready expression. And yet here and there throughout our country, in magazine articles, in newspaper editorials, in public speech, we catch this note, a note of challenge to all the institutions of our country. Are they fulfilling in the largest measure their own destiny? Are they realizing the purpose for which they were founded?

"Public opinion has been sending out its challenge ever since the conclusion of the war, calling to account our Government, our great church organizations, our political and social life generally, our moral standards as evidenced in the great institutions which are endeavoring to maintain these standards; and among others, this opinion is holding to account the great universities of the land, is saying to Princeton, to Harvard, to Yale, to all the colleges, Are you realizing the full measure of your opportunity as regards the preparation of your young men to take their part, to do their service, to undergo their sacrifice for the sake of the country and the world at large?

Efficiency in Business

"The second influence is one which should be considered even more seriously than any pressure brought to bear from without. It is the pressure which arises within our own thoughts and feelings as teachers as administrators in these colleges.

"Are we doing everything that we might for our young men here at Princeton! Naturally we put to ourselves the same question a business man, a president of a great corporation or a superintendent of a large factory puts to himself when he says to himself, to his executive committee or

board of trustees, how about our output, are we reaching the maximum qualitative standard, are we avoiding every suggestion of waste at every part of the process! We in the university ask ourselves the same question. Is there waste here that we can save, can we improve the qualitative standard of the young men taught by us and whom we send out into the world to represent us and Princeton everywhere throughout the world?

Stirring in the Minds of Undergraduates

"Then there is the third influence, which I think is even more to be considered than either of the other two. It is the stirring in the minds of our undergraduates themselves, questioning their own life here at Princeton, asking of us the same question, are you doing for us everything that is possible in the way of our courses of instruction, in reference to the atmosphere of intellectual interest and curiosity that should exist on the campus?

"For this reason, in the last two years two courses have been introduced, one on the Ethics of Christianity, given by Professor Archibald A. Bowman of the Department of Philosophy, which dealt with the ethics of the New Testament and showed its reflection in modern life, literature and philosophy. The second is the course given by Professor Rogers on Ancient Oriental Literature which has been so revised as to deal primarily with the literature of the Hebrews and consequently with the Old Testament. He pointed out that it was gratifying to note that these two courses, open to all who wish to take them, have enlisted the enthusiasm of large numbers of Princeton undergraduates."